

**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The foregoing amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office Action dated June 7, 2004. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and these remarks.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated that Claims 2, 3, 6, 8, 10-15 and 17 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the recitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Although the Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejections presented by the Office Action, the claims have been amended to expedite prosecution. That is, amended independent Claim 1 represents original Claim 2 rewritten in independent form including all of the recitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, Claim 6 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the recitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, Claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the recitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and Claim 17 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the recitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In addition, a clarifying and non-narrowing amendment has been made to Claim 6. The Office Action indicates that Claims 18-20 are withdrawn from consideration, and they have been cancelled without prejudice.

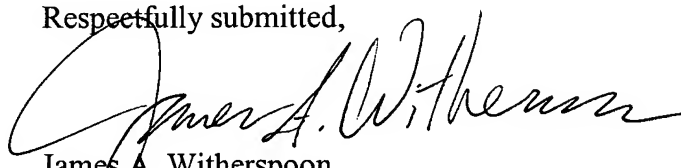
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that each of the presently pending Independent Claims 1, 6, 8 and 17 are allowable. It is further respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable due to their respective dependence from an allowable independent claim, and because the dependent claims further patentably distinguish the present invention.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for immediate allowance, and such action is solicited. If for some reason the Examiner deems that the present application is not in condition for immediate allowance, it is respectfully requested that he contact the undersigned in an effort to expedite prosecution.

Confirmation of Receipt of Foreign Priority Document

It is noted that the Examiner has not acknowledged receipt of the foreign priority documents that was filed December 4, 2003, for the present application. Accordingly, it is requested that the Examiner acknowledge receipt of the foreign priority document in the next communication from the PTO. Applicant will be pleased to provide proof of filing the foreign priority document upon the Examiner's request.

Respectfully submitted,

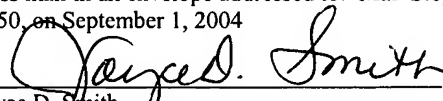


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on September 1, 2004



Joyce D. Smith